Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-7 presented in the underlying International Application No. PCT/EP2004/006217, and add new claims 8-15 as shown in the listing of claims.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (new): A mechanical locking device for mechanically connected contactors, the device comprising

a first and a second actuating member configured to move in a direction parallel to a first connecting sidewall of a first contactor and a second connecting sidewall of a second contactor, the first actuating member being operatively connected to a first electromagnetic operating mechanism and a first movable contact of the first contactor, the second actuating member being operatively connected to a second electromagnetic operating mechanism and a second movable contact of the second contactor, the first actuating member defining a first curved recess disposed adjacent the first connecting sidewall, the second actuating member defining a second curved recess disposed adjacent the second connecting sidewall; and

a locking element including a rolling element configured to be received in a respective opening in each of the first and second connecting sidewalls;

wherein the first actuating member is configured to urge the locking element into the second recess when the first contactor is in a switched-on condition and the second actuating member is configured to urge the locking element into the first recess when the second contactor is in a switched-on condition.

Claim 9 (new): The locking device as recited in claim 8 wherein the first and second recesses each include a shape of a spherical cap and the rolling element includes a form of a ball.

Claim 10 (new): The locking device as recited in claim 8 wherein the first and second recesses each include a shape of a cylindrical segment and the rolling element includes a form of a cylindrical roller.

Claim 11 (new): The locking device as recited in claim 8 wherein the first and second recesses each include a shape of a barrel segment and the rolling element includes a form of a barrel-shaped roller.

Claim 12 (new): The locking device as recited in claim 8 wherein the first and second recesses each include a form of a disk segment and the rolling element includes a form of a disk.

Claim 13 (new): An auxiliary tool for holding and inserting a locking element into respective facing first and second openings in respective first and second connecting sidewalls of respective first and second contactors to be mechanically locked, a first and a second actuating member being configured to move in a direction parallel to the first and second connecting sidewalls, the first actuating member being operatively connected to a first electromagnetic operating mechanism and a first movable contact of the first contactor, the second actuating member being operatively connected to a second electromagnetic operating mechanism and a second movable contact of the second contactor, the first actuating member defining a first curved recess disposed adjacent the first connecting sidewall, the second actuating member defining a second curved recess disposed adjacent the second connecting sidewall, the first actuating member being configured to urge the locking element into the second recess when the first contactor is in a switched-on condition and the second actuating member being configured to urge the locking element into the first recess when the second contactor is in a switched-on condition, the locking element including a rolling element configured to be received in the first and second openings, the auxiliary tool comprising:

an elongated flat portion including a side;

an elastic fork portion extending from an end of the elongated flat portion, the elastic fork defining a fork slot having a receiving space configured to elastically hold the rolling element so that a first portion of the held rolling element protrudes above the side of the elongated flat portion, the first portion facing the first or second connecting wall when the rolling element is inserted in the facing openings of the first and second openings in the respective first and second connecting sidewalls.

Claim 14 (new): The auxiliary tool as recited in claim 13 further comprising a holding portion extending from a second end of the elongated flat portion, the holding portion being configured to receive the rolling element.

Claim 15 (new): The auxiliary tool as recited in claim 14 wherein the holding portion includes a second elastic fork portion, the second fork defining a second fork slot having a second receiving space configured to elastically hold the rolling element so that the first portion of the held rolling element protrudes above the side of the elongated flat portion, the first portion facing the first or second connecting wall when the rolling element is inserted in the facing openings of the first and second openings in the respective first and second connecting sidewalls.